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SPEECHES DELIVERED AT
THE ANGLO-JEWISH CONFERENCE
convened by
THE
COUNCIL FOR GERMAN JEWRY
at
THE DORCHESTER HOTEL
on
SUNDAY, MARCH 15th, 1936

THE COUNCIL FOR GERMAN JEWRY,
WOBURN HOUSE,
UPPER WOBURN PLACE,
LONDON, W.C.1.

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MR. ANTHONY DE ROTHSCHILD

I have a number of apologies from friends who were unable to attend. Amongst them I should like to mention those from the Chief Rabbi, Dr. Claude Montefiore, Lord Swaythling, Sir Robert Waley Cohen, Mr. Neville Laski and Mrs. H. Irwell.

We are meeting here today at a time of unexampled difficulty, and it is unnecessary for me to emphasise the obvious fact that the outcome of the present international crisis must have a very direct bearing upon the question which we are here to discuss this afternoon. We can only hope and pray that a satisfactory and peaceful way out may be found as a result of the deliberations which are now going on. I hope that nothing that I may say in that connection will suggest in your minds any doubt as to the necessity and the importance of the appeal, or hesitation in advocating the proposals before you today. But it must be obvious that until the sky is clearer we do not know exactly how things will develop, and we must proceed, perhaps, more slowly and more cautiously with our plans than we should otherwise wish to do; and we must continue an intensive course of organisation and preparation for the work that lies ahead of us.

There is plenty to be done in both directions, so that as soon as world politics allow us to go forward we may be ready to take advantage of the first favourable moment to take effective steps. An outline of the plan we are discussing has already appeared in the Press, and has been prepared, in spite of great difficulty, with great energy and industry by Lord Bearsted, Sir Herbert Samuel and Mr. Simon Marks, with the help of many others. We already owe to the three gentlemen named a great debt of gratitude for giving us their time, and for their visit to America, which has done so much to make this proposal possible.

The plan which they will describe to you is ambitious, and rightly so. It takes up the challenge of the Nuremberg laws and, building on the experience of the last three years, it aims at providing an orderly exodus for a large number of the younger generation of the Jews from Germany to Palestine, and to such other countries of the world as may be ready to receive them. It is a plan which will take some three to four years to carry out, even in its beginning, and which we hope will prove the foundation of further activities and further development as time passes by. A great deal of preliminary work has first to be done, and much money has to be spent in training and preparing the emigrants so that they may fit into their new surroundings, and so be able quickly to prove their worth as citizens in the new countries in which they take up residence. It is reasonable to hope that a large proportion will be able to make their homes in Palestine, but it is to be expected

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that there will also be openings elsewhere, and, as I understand it, the guiding principle for those in charge of the funds collected will be to spend the money in the best interests of the Jews from Germany, so as to give an opportunity to emigrate to the greatest number.

I shall not detain you longer, as the details of the plan will be elaborated by other speakers who are more conversant with it, and can command more eloquent language. But I would take this opportunity of urging you all, as earnestly as I possibly can, to give this movement your whole-hearted support. I feel this very deeply indeed, and so I believe do all of you. I believe we all of us have it really at heart. Every instinct in us rises up against this cruelty and this injustice. There is a voice which cries in us and to us: "This must not go on! What can we do to stop it?" Well, I believe the only contribution we can make, the only part we can play, is by helping to organise the exodus. How this shall be worked out in detail will be further described to you by Sir Herbert Samuel, on whom I now call.

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SIR HERBERT SAMUEL

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the Chairman has said, our minds at this moment must be in large measure filled by the gravity of the international situation. We know that the leading Statesmen in Europe are now gathered together in London in order to arrive at a solution of the present crisis. We who are engaged in this movement are bound to proceed on the assumption that the crisis will be overcome. If not, then indeed this movement, and many other things as well, will go under. But we must assume that the wisdom of Statesmen is not so barren in the world that they will be unable to find a solution of the impending difficulties and therefore this Conference goes forward, and this movement must go forward. We shall endeavour to achieve the aims which we have set before us, unless Europe is disturbed by some grave issue arising.

I do not propose today to describe to you the position of the Jews in Germany—you know it well. You have followed all the tragic history; you have read the report of Mr. James McDonald, who has described with complete objectivity and impartiality, and with intimate knowledge, what is the condition of the half million of Jews in Germany. And the question before you is not how to prove the gravity of their plight, but how to relieve it. What then should be done in existing circumstances? Are we to sit still and wait until there is a change of policy in Germany—until that wiser and more humane Germany of earlier generations will re-assert itself—until Germany shall free herself from the disgrace that now rests upon her name through the activities of a Streicher, and the publication of a *Stuermer*? We have often heard it said in recent years, that there would soon be a change, that enlightened public opinion in Germany would bring about a reversal. But that has not come about—on the contrary, the persecution has been intensified, and since the Nuremberg Laws were enacted last September, the Jewish population of Germany have found their position absolutely intolerable. The best information that is available seems to indicate not that there is likely to be an alleviation of existing conditions, but rather that, when the Olympic Games are over and foreign visitors are no longer in Germany in large numbers as they will be this summer, it is more probable that the persecution will be still further embittered. Are we to wait until the other countries of the world intervene—until the League of Nations responds to the appeal made to it by Mr. McDonald to take definite action in approaching and in pressing the German Government to change its policy? I fear that there again there are no indications that any such action is probable in the near future. So that as things now are we have to envisage a situation in which the persecution of the German Jews will continue, and in which the Powers are not likely to intervene in what they would regard as a question of domestic German policy.

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For the Jewish communities of the rest of the world, it has become quite plain that the problem is no longer one of charitable relief for refugees in distress—it must be handled in a more comprehensive and in a more fundamental fashion. In the meantime, while awaiting some change, while watching the course of events, the lives of all these young men and women now growing up and seeking careers and livelihoods, are being blighted. There is no hope for them. And they—the young Jews of Germany—feel that they must seek their future in more fortunate lands, where there is still liberty, where there is still impartial justice before the Law, and where there is equal opportunity for character and talent.

THE PLAN OUTLINED

Where then can they go? Within the last three years about half of the refugees have found homes in Palestine. When this great enterprise of Palestine, which has been one of the most remarkable features in the modern history of the Jews, was initiated, it was hoped and believed that the development of the country would open a prospect for thousands of the Jews of Eastern Europe, whose lot was cast in difficult lines. That has proved to be so. None of us twenty years ago could, however, have foreseen that as many as 300,000 Jews would have been able to settle, and almost all obtain a secure livelihood, in so small a country as Palestine, within so brief a period. Yet that has been the result. 300,000 have gone there, and still there will be room for very many more, subject to two conditions:—first, that the immigrants themselves are of the right character and have the right qualifications; second, that the prosperity of Palestine continues to be promoted by the active development of the country. The immigration is necessarily conditioned by the absorptive capacity of the country, but that absorptive capacity is not a fixed thing. It is very different from what it was in 1920. It may be very different in 1940 from what it is to-day; and our task must be, among other measures, to help to increase that absorptive capacity of Palestine in order that it may offer a home and a livelihood to hundreds of thousands more of the refugees of Europe.

It is hoped that, in four years, possibly 50,000 German refugees may go to Palestine—you cannot foretell exactly. That will be 10,000 or 12,000 a year; and since the immigration into Palestine last year—in one year—was 60,000, it should not be impossible for 10,000 or 12,000 German Jews to go year by year into that country during the next four years. The other half, it is hoped, may find homes in other parts of the world. It is not possible, nor desirable, to attempt to specify to what countries these refugees might go, possibly in comparatively small numbers to a great variety of countries. But there again, a figure of 10,000 to 12,000 a year for the whole of Asia, Africa and America, apart from Europe, is not an unmanageable figure. So we are hopeful that so far as outlets are concerned, they will be available for the hundred thousand of the younger generation whom we propose to assist to remove from Germany. There is in very many countries an active demand for artisans, skilled artisans, who in many states of South America and elsewhere can find immediate employment; and if they are trained and really skilled, there will be no difficulty in placing a considerable number.

INITIATIVE OF REFUGEES CREATES EMPLOYMENT

Again it is hoped that many of these people, with character, energy, intelligence and education, will be able to set on foot new enterprises. Here in Great Britain the refugees who have already come in have established new enterprises, and I am informed by the German Refugees Committee, which has been working so actively during these years, that they estimate that between 6,000 and 7,000 employees have found work in the enterprises established by the German Jewish refugees—a number far greater than the refugees themselves who are established in this country. The immigration has proved, not to have increased unemployment, but to have diminished British unemployment, and there is a net balance to the credit of the refugees from the point of view of the effect upon the labour market. Similarly in Holland, careful statistics were compiled, and it was found that within two years the new enterprises established by the German refugees employed 4,500 workers, taken off the Dutch labour market.

THE PROPERTY OF GERMAN JEWS

If, indeed, it is possible for these new emigrants from Germany to take with them the properties which they own in Germany, then the movement will be greatly facilitated, and the number of new enterprises which could be started would be considerably increased. But that is a problem of extreme difficulty, on account of the restrictions that are imposed upon the German exchanges—the difficulty of transferring wealth, except in the form of goods. It is not clear as yet by what means that can be done. The Council for German Jewry does not intend to allow itself to be immersed in the controversy over the promotion of the sale of German goods abroad in order to secure the export of German capital. When I went to America I was certainly not prepared to go as a “commercial traveller” for German trade, and in general we cannot see our way to support proposals of that kind. But if the German Jews themselves who propose emigrating can make arrangements for the transfer of their property, certainly that will greatly facilitate emigration and will no doubt make them more welcome immigrants in the countries to which they will go.

The tasks which the Council has set before itself are these:—to encourage the training of emigrants in the occupations which are mostly in demand in the countries to which they go; to help in securing their transport; to help to secure for them wherever possible favourable conditions of admission to the countries to which they will migrate; to provide loans of moderate amounts for new enterprises in suitable cases—loans which we would expect to be repaid, and which the German Jews themselves would wish to repay. They are a self-respecting people, self-reliant; they have no desire to be recipients of the charity of the Jews of the world, and such assistance as may be given to them in their dire need they would themselves earnestly desire to repay, as soon as they were in a position to do so. This movement will assist further the development of Palestine in so far as it is useful to German-Jewish emigration; and lastly, some amount of temporary relief must still be given to those German refugees in this country, in other countries of Europe, and elsewhere in the world, who for the time being are in grave distress.

You will perceive, ladies and gentlemen, that this task is an immense one. To move a population of 100,000 people in the presence of the great difficulties that surround this movement, is a most formidable undertaking. And this is not the only purpose calling upon the resources and the energies of the Jewish communities of the world. Each one has to provide for its own needs in its own country. There are the claims of our co-religionists in Poland, who are in a condition of extreme economic distress, and we should not wish to divert philanthropic aid from Poland to any other purposes. Nor is it proposed that the outlet to Palestine should in any degree be monopolised for the German Jews, grave as their plight is; and certainly we recognise that a large proportion of the immigration certificates must be given for the assistance of Poland and other Eastern European countries. And further we should be sorry indeed if any movement of ours were to impair in any degree the active general development of Palestine that has been proceeding during these years. Indeed, an arrangement has been made this year, as in the previous years, that the Keren Hayesod should make no separate Appeal, but should join in this Appeal. But from the proceeds there will be guaranteed during the four years under consideration, a sum of £28,000 a year, the minimum necessary revenue from Great Britain to the Keren Hayesod, and that sum will undoubtedly aid Polish Jewry as well, for to the extent that Palestine is successfully developed, it will be of assistance to all the countries of emigration.

THE CO-OPERATION OF AMERICAN JEWRY

Obviously, faced by so great a task, our first duty was to endeavour to enlist the support of American Jewry—the most numerous and by far the wealthiest Jewish community in the world. To paraphrase Canning's famous phrase:—"we would wish to bring in the New World to swell the balances of the Old." We suggested when we went to America that if we could find here, with the assistance of the British Empire and Europe, One Million Pounds of the sum which was necessary, they would perhaps do their best to obtain the other Two Million Pounds to complete the total which our main object requires. They readily agreed to do that. Perhaps in the circular statement that we have issued, where we speak of the American leaders having undertaken responsibility for Two Million Pounds, we used a little too strong wording. Their position is exactly the same as ours—they will use their best efforts to raise the Two Million Pounds; we will do our best to raise One Million Pounds, but neither can guarantee that these great sums will be raised. When there, we received many expressions of cordial desire for co-operation on behalf of the American Jewish Community, and yesterday I received from Mr. Felix Warburg, one of the principal leaders of American Jewry, this short telegram:—"In your opening speech, we hope you will stress our oft-repeated assurances and desire to co-operate." The spirit that animates American Jewry is most cordial, I feel sure that they will do their utmost; and the campaigns are already actively proceeding towards that end.

The Council for German Jewry will continue the work of the Central British Fund for German Jewry, and we shall have the fullest and most intimate co-operation of those who have taken the lead in the previous years. Our Chairman of to-day and Mr. Lionel de Rothschild, and many more who have been active during these former years will be active still. And we have enlisted new helpers. The Honorary

Directors of the Department of Training and Immigration will be Professor Norman Bentwich and Sir Wyndham Deedes, whose names will be familiar to you, and who both command the confidence of you all. We are proposing to establish no new organisations; we have no desire to centralise the whole of the work which is being done, and to create something in the nature of a bottle-neck in London. All the various organisations in America, in England and in Europe which have been labouring with so much devotion and efficiency during the last three years will continue their various operations, and our task will be to suggest fresh plans, to co-ordinate their action, to distribute the work among them, and to raise additional funds—and that last is obviously one of the most urgent and necessary of our tasks. Before long, as soon as this European complication has been allayed, as we hope it will be within the next few days, we trust that a Preliminary List of subscribers will be published. And when it is published it will be found that three family groups, whose representatives are sitting not very far away from me, I will not mention any names, have come forward with a generosity which can only be described as princely. We hope that their lead will be followed, according to the various means of the various individuals, by the whole of the Anglo-Jewish Community.

When Rabelais died, it was found that he had left a very short Will, which contained only these sentences:—"I have nothing. I owe much. The rest I give to the poor." I am afraid that there are some who have much and owe nothing, but give very little to the poor. That is not, however, characteristic of the Anglo-Jewish community—it has always been noted for its generosity, its philanthropy, and on this occasion I feel that it will rise to the height of the need.

A NEW EXODUS

We propose to focus our first appeal on the first day of Passover—a day eminently suitable for a call such as this. We have sent letters and cablegrams to the Jewish communities throughout the whole world, and the Chief Rabbi of the British Empire, Dr. Hertz, has also sent messages to the Rabbinate everywhere asking them to make appeals in their communities, and to arouse their active interest and enthusiasm for the cause, on the first day of Passover.

As in the first Exodus, this is a most significant and momentous occasion in Jewish History. The events of to-day are the history of to-morrow. You all know the history of our ancient people—often chequered, often tragic. We are all conscious that our race has its faults, but we are also conscious that during those thousands of years of history, many of its members have rendered illustrious service to mankind, in religion and philosophy, in science and statesmanship, in music and literature, as well as in every form of economic and industrial activity. We cannot endure the thought that on one great community of Jews there should be cast all this opprobrium and insult—that they should be subjected to ruin merely because of their race—that they should suffer because they are Jews.

It is not enough that we should show them sympathy. It is not enough that we should feel anger and resentment. We are bound to come to their rescue by every form of practical help.

DR. CHAIM WEIZMANN

There remains very little for me to say after the admirable statement which we have just heard from Sir Herbert Samuel. I should like, at the outset, to state that the organisation which I have the honour to represent associates itself wholeheartedly with the work which has been undertaken by the mission which went to America, led by Sir Herbert Samuel. It is particularly gratifying to us, to the Jewish Agency, and to the World Zionist Organisation, to see Sir Herbert Samuel once more at the head of a great endeavour on behalf of, this time a section of, the Jewish community. It was our privilege to co-operate with him in what was, perhaps, the most delicate and the most critical stage of our work in Palestine. We all know him, apart from all his other qualifications, as the first High Commissioner for Palestine. He has, in his wisdom, laid a true foundation for the development of the Jewish National Home.

I understand, and I shall say only one word about it, that the organisation for this work is not yet completed. The British Committee is set up, and I can only express my fervent hope that the Committee across the Atlantic will be built up on the same principles of effective co-operation and goodwill as here in England.

THE ROLE OF PALESTINE

In this task in which we are engaged, and which cannot be solved by ordinary philanthropic effort, this task of trans-migrating all those thousands of young people, I was happy to hear this afternoon, that amongst the many outlets which may be found in the world for migrating Jews, Palestine occupies a foremost place.

I should like, with your permission, Sir, to dwell for a moment on the reasons why there are always limiting factors to the possibility of absorbing new people in an old economy. These factors are composed of many elements. As far as other countries are concerned, whether it be America, or South Africa, or Canada, the possibilities are apparently unlimited. It might seem that it should have been easy to integrate into the economic life of those vast countries a hundred thousand, or fifty thousand young people. Still, the world has witnessed the extraordinary difficulty which the League of Nations found recently in placing the Assyrians, who were a peasant population, and who, through a misfortune, had to leave their old habitation. The League of Nations searched over the whole world for a place for these 25,000 people, and only recently some of them were found a home somewhere in the marshes of Syria. How much more difficult is it to find a place in this wide, sorrowful world for 50,000 young Jews, and German Jews at that; because the power of absorption as far as other countries, not Palestine, are concerned, is determined by a limiting factor, and this



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limiting factor is the tolerability of the nation for the immigration of Jews. We know that a certain number of Jews can be absorbed into a country, and as Jews have proved that they are an "insoluble" element—to use a chemical term—the quantity which can be absorbed in each country proves to be small. The formula reacts quickly, and saturation point is rapidly reached, and the Jewish communities in the respective countries are always full of anxiety lest there will be too many and that anti-Semitism may be stimulated.

I have had cause, during these three years, to speak to many statesmen of the British Dominions, who cannot by any stretch of imagination be suspected of animosity towards Jews; they were all genuinely willing to help, but the one advice they always gave was: "Go slowly, in small doses, in small quantities, lest the immigrants prove unacceptable to the community which I represent, and harm the well-established Jewish community in my country." This is a factor with which we shall have to reckon. Still, I am willing to share Sir Herbert Samuel's opinion, that we may succeed in "dissolving" some twelve to fifteen thousand Jews annually in the waters of the vast countries which stand outside Palestine.

The task is different in Palestine. First of all it does not happen to be a big country. It is, as you know—I do not need to prove it to you—smaller than Canada, smaller than South Africa, and even than many smaller countries. Still, there too there is a limiting factor; the limiting factor is physical as well as economic—the power of absorption of the country. To put it perhaps a little vulgarly: You can send a Jew into America, and he will find the money there, whereas you must first send the money into Palestine and then the Jew. But, as far as tolerability is concerned, it is unlimited.

ITS ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY

If we could arrange the power of absorption, which to a certain extent, but not entirely, depends on the Mandatory Power, if we could organise the power of absorption so as to assimilate vast numbers, then there is no reason why they should not come in in their thousands. There is also this difference: Jews come there as of right and not on sufferance. The task, therefore, as far as Palestine is concerned, reduces itself to increasing the physical power of absorption. We cannot extend the country geographically, for Geography is Geography even for Jews, but we can intensify its economic life so as to produce on one square meter twice as much as it had been producing before. This is not an oratorical phrase. The experience of the last twenty years has proved that the industry of the Jews, the application of scientific methods to Palestinian agriculture and industry, has achieved this miracle. The country has absorbed 300,000 people in a comparatively short time, and it seems that the more people that come into the country, the greater are the possibilities that are created for the absorption of further immigrants.

I remember that in the year 1930 a very distinguished British statesman, not, however, distinguished by a particularly deep comprehension of the Zionist problem, said to me: "Why, Dr. Weizmann, there is not room to swing a cat in Palestine." Since then a great many cats have been swung, and 100,000 young people have come in during the last few years, and if it were not for the international situation, which we all hope and pray will find a peaceful solution, I think this flow of immigration would continue unabated.

THE POLISH TRAGEDY

Let me say one word about German immigration. As you have heard, we have absorbed about 30,000 in the last two and a half years. A word has also been said here about the Polish situation, and I am conscious of the fact that members of the Polish Jewish Community consider that, somehow, the German Jews have become the pampered children of the Jewish community. I shall not enter into this argument, but I shall give the reasons why the German tragedy has particularly affected us. To refer only to one: Here was a Jewish community, fully emancipated, taking part for over a hundred years in the cultural life, not only of its own community, but also of the world, having made one of the largest contributions to civilisation, to Europe. To fall suddenly from such heights to such depths is tragedy, even in Jewish history, rich as it is in tragedies. Jews of Poland and of Russia, and I am one of them, have been used to this and also have a different power of resistance. When we suffer, many of us know why we suffer. The German tragedy is so huge because some of them do not even know why. However, that by the way. Let me say that owing to this German Jewish immigration a good deal of Polish immigration has been made possible. The Germans have created (when I say Germans I mean German Jews, and I hope I may be forgiven by the Nazis for this) possibilities for the absorption of other immigrants. They have created industries. They have brought in a great deal of discipline, order, skill and capital.

Only one figure: The industrial output of Palestine has grown very rapidly for such a small country, and amounts to-day to eight million pounds a year. Industry employs to-day 30,000 workmen, not reckoning the building trades. The wages bill of Palestinian industries is over Two Million Pounds a year. If you consider that the value of the orange trade is Two and a Half Millions a year, you will see what enormous strides industry has made in a short time. That, to a very considerable extent, and particularly in the last three years, is due to German effort.

This may be said to offset the half unconscious feeling of resentment that, although the tragedy in Poland is so great, we are fixing our attention more on Germany than on Poland. But I am afraid that the turn will come for dealing with the Polish problem too; I am sorry to say very, very soon.

I have said almost all I want to say, and I do not wish to detain this distinguished assembly any longer. I shall quote you something out of a little book which we are all going to read in a very short time. In about three weeks time, in every Jewish house, a prayer will go up to heaven for a suitable and peaceful issue in the world, and for the welfare of our own people, and amongst these prayers will be one text:

"Bechal Dor Vedor Omdim Oleinu Lechalusainu"

"In every century, in every generation, men have risen against us to destroy us." But they have not succeeded. Neither will these destroyers succeed if we do our duty, and I think the Anglo-Jewish Community, through its leaders, to whatever party and whatever view they may belong, have proved that they are conscious of their duty. And I pray that the troubles which are covering the political skies now may soon be over, and that we may be allowed to go on with our work of helping the needy, and rebuilding our people on sound foundations.

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MR. SIMON MARKS

It is incredible that in the 20th century a modern "Kulturstaat" should promulgate laws which not only deprive people of the elementary rights of citizenship, but degrade and impoverish a section of the community whose only crime is that of belonging to another race. The decrees of Nuremberg dispelled once and for all the belief that the persecution of the Jews in Germany was a passing phase incidental to a revolution in progress, and that as soon as this phase had passed, a new basis would be found which would enable the Jews to continue to live in that country. Hitherto it had been said that irresponsible elements had created these difficulties. Now it is not even the Nazi Party, but the German Government itself, which has set its seal on the violation of human rights won through centuries of struggle and gradual enlightenment.

The protests of the non-Jewish world outside Germany, and of the Jewish world, cannot counteract this foul blow, this ruthless and remorseless policy to exterminate a people. That is the position which must be faced to-day—a hopeless one for the Jews in Germany. Nazi Germany's anti-Jewish policy is a challenge to civilisation in all countries of the world, as Mr. J. G. McDonald, the High Commissioner for Refugees, so eloquently demonstrated. "It is being made increasingly difficult for Jews and non-Aryans in Germany to sustain life. In many parts of the country there is a systematic attempt at the starvation of the Jewish population."

THE URGENCY OF OUR TASK

Such was the position which the Committee of the Central British Fund had to deal with in October last, when the question of a further appeal was raised. It was felt that we could not sit back supinely watching whilst a whole community of our fellow Jews in Germany was in the process of having its social, economic and political status destroyed. We all felt that a greater and more intensive effort was required, and that some plan had to be evolved which would enable us to come to the rescue.

In our plans we have spoken of assisting the immigration of some 100,000 souls, mainly of young people between the ages of 17 and 35. The object of a sound scheme of assisted immigration must be to establish those categories of a population which can be self-supporting in other countries in the shortest period, so that they can then bring over their relatives and friends, and clearly it is the category of the youth which is most suitable for this purpose. In analysing the German Jewish population according to age distribution, we found that there were one hundred thousand in this category that we are desirous of assisting to emigrate in an orderly fashion. We envisaged this task over a number of years and we hoped that Palestine would absorb at least one half.

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This is not the place to go into the details of such a plan. (Suffice it to say that they are being worked out by our most competent authorities.) This plan received the ready acceptance of the English Committee, who were united in the view that concerted action must be taken, and taken quickly.

We were indeed fortunate to secure the co-operation of Sir Herbert Samuel as Chairman of a Committee to be formed to take up this matter.

THE MISSION TO THE UNITED STATES

It was clear that, to carry out this plan, the support, financial and moral, of our American Jewish friends was essential, and so the mission came into being and proceeded without delay to consult with them, to put before them the ideas which had been evolved and to seek their advice and their co-operation in all respects.

The delegation succeeded in focussing the attention of both the Jewish and non-Jewish world on the German Jewish tragedy. We made plain the need for an organised Jewry to deal with this problem, not on philanthropic and relief lines, but on statesmanlike and constructive principles.

The first fruits of our effort were seen in a better understanding of our problem, in the promise of co-operation, and in the adoption of a programme outlining the broad principles of our proposed activities. Before we left the United States, the leaders in charge of the United Palestine Appeal and the Joint Distribution Committee Appeal agreed that the surplus over and above the amounts required from their funds for their normal obligations would be devoted to carrying out these plans. We received satisfactory assurances that the requisite amount would be forthcoming.

Our delegation did not go in the role of mere suppliants. Before leaving this country they had assured themselves of a substantial sum of money as a start, and we undertook that this and the other European countries would, over a period, contribute one-third of the sum, namely, £1,000,000, so that we came to them offering our services as partners in this common task, and requested that as America has the largest single Jewish community in the world—some 10 to 12 times as great as in this country—they should find the remaining two-thirds. We were not afraid of a possible failure. We were anxious that an attempt on broad and constructive lines should be made so that future generations would not say of us that we had failed to face up to one of the most serious problems which has ever confronted Jews throughout their chequered history.

THE TRAGIC STATE OF EAST EUROPEAN JEWRY

Wherever our eyes turn in Central and Eastern Europe the same gloomy outlook prevails. Yesterday in Germany, to-day in Poland, and to-morrow God knows where, civilised life is menaced.

For the Jew Central Europe is becoming an economic shambles from which there is no escape except in death, degradation, or flight. The same conditions as in Tsarist Russia—licence to assault, murder and rob Jewish families, set fire to their homes,

if not authorised, is as a rule connived at by the rulers. Jew-baiting is regarded as a mere diversion from domestic problems. Where physical violence is not permitted, legislation designed to impoverish and degrade our people is enforced. The rulers of these countries show little skill in conducting their own affairs in a decent modern way, and they refuse Jewish co-operation. Must Europeans in the 20th century return to the attitude of their medieval ancestors in their treatment of our people?

What is to be the future of the Jew in Central Europe? That is not only our problem, but the problem of European statesmen. Must we Jews for ever live in servile resignation to a fate marked out by others? Can we not do something to forge our own destiny? Our people do not wish to live in the slums of Central Europe.

A CHALLENGE TO JEWISH STATESMANSHIP

Happily there are possibilities, taking the long view, of dealing with this problem in a constructive manner, if world Jewry will come to the rescue and finance a systematic plan which will be enduring and which will enable the Jewish people to retain their self-respect. In such a plan Palestine has begun to play a dominant role. There have emigrated from Central and Eastern Europe in the past three years a total of 175,000 Jews, of whom some 80%, 142,000, have found a home in Palestine. In other countries Jews are looked upon as foreigners, and feared as competitors, no matter what contribution they have made or can make towards enriching those countries. Not so in Palestine, where the Jew comes as of right, and not as of favour. There he is regarded as a co-worker and a co-builder.

Those who have worked for Palestine over so many heartbreaking years feel great satisfaction that their efforts, often misunderstood, criticised and maligned, have succeeded in making of Palestine not only a spiritual centre, but a physical haven of refuge for the homeless and the broken in spirit. Palestine is capable of dealing in even a larger and more comprehensive way with the grave problems which face us. How? Immigration depends on the absorptive capacity of the country. That in turn depends upon the financial resources and organising ability we can direct towards that country—in settlement on the land, in the development of industrial enterprises, in all that conduces towards the building up of a modern country. Invaluable experience in the past 15 years has been gained in these fields. The growth of Palestine has been astounding. We have built towns, villages, schools, hospitals, a university, scientific institutions; we have established industries, and, above all, we have created a peasantry rooted in the soil. The population has increased from 50,000 in 1918 to 400,000. The answer to the question how Palestine can help in the solution of our problem, is to build up a strong and vigorous community, rooted in the soil, and not *Luftmenschen*. That is an enduring solution. World Jewry could help finance this development. It would be the least costly in the long run; it would be the most dignified reply to the humiliations which have been heaped on us and endured in Central Europe for so long, and which are now being intensified.

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But whatever our own feelings and ideals, we have agreed to approach our problem in an objective spirit. During the last three years 30,000 German Jews have found a permanent home in Palestine. A large proportion of German Jews wish to go to Palestine and are eager for the specialised training required for settlement in that country. The Jewish Agency is anxious to co-operate by placing a large number of them.

ECONOMIC EXISTENCE AND A FREE LIFE

This is no partisan question, and will not be treated as such by the Council. We shall facilitate the emigration of German Jews to all countries where there are prospects for an economic existence and a free life—where Jews may hold up their heads with pride in being members of a great and worthy community.

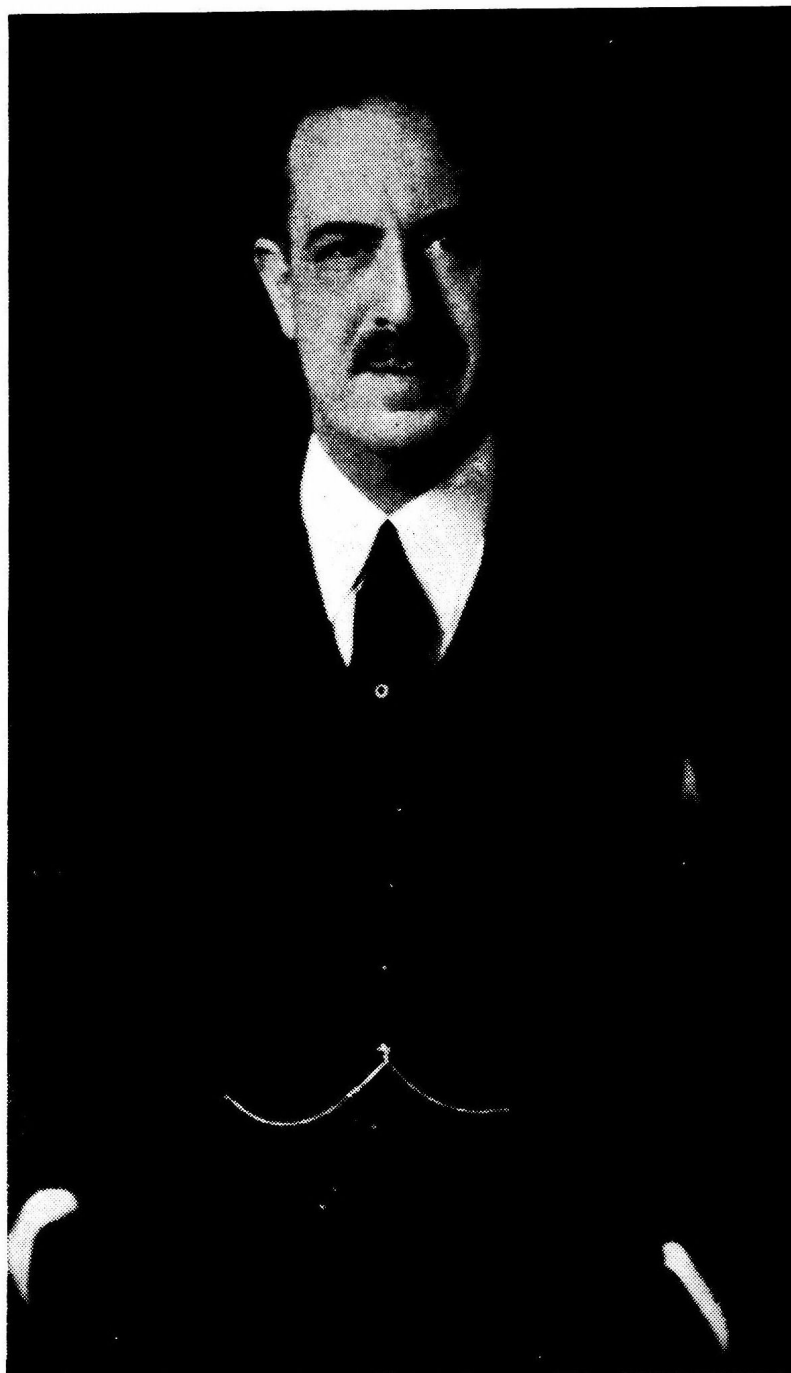
When we first adumbrated these ideas we found some who were sceptical. These people were caught in a net of cold despair. They said: "The world is not in a mood to allow immigration. The Jews of Germany are trapped." Such a mood is entirely unjustified, and is particularly dangerous because it encourages the view that nothing can be done.

We ourselves felt that we were caught in a vicious circle. We had no friendly governments ready to help. We had no labour permits or certificates. We had no trained people. We had no money. We had no central organisation. We had no plans. We had to cut through these negatives. We started with provisional plans. We have created the nucleus of a comprehensive organisation. Now we are seeking funds.

Give us funds—large funds, for our schemes of training, emigration and settlement. We are confident that we shall find countries for a class of immigrants which every rational country will find to be a valuable constructive asset.

I should like to take this opportunity of paying a tribute to my colleagues on the mission, to their devotion, and to the manner in which they carried on. We were united in spirit and in our approach to the problem.

15/30



VISCOUNT BEARSTED

I speak last, because I have the harder task. You have heard from the other speakers of the difficulties, of our plans and of our aspirations. I have to ask you for something, for your money, without which those plans and aspirations will be as naught.

We have surveyed the world. We have taken account of the gates that are open and the doors that are shut. We have rejoiced where we have hopes, we have despaired where we had none; but we think we see the light, the light which we shall spread amongst those who to-day dwell in what, for want of a better term, one must call a dark place.

THE PROSPECT OF THE YOUTH

We have decided that we must help primarily the youth, because it is the youth who to-day suffer more than anybody. Think of your own youth. Think what it would have meant to you if, at the age when you were considering your future career, you had been told, not only that you had no career in the country in which you and your fathers lived, but that any possibility or any hope of fitting yourself for a career, by school or by university education, was closed. That is the dismal prospect of the Jewish youth in Germany to-day, and that is the prospect from which we have to relieve them. We feel that if we can but lift the youth once more from the depths of depression to which they have fallen, then we shall see them in turn uplift the others, rescue their older dependents as time goes on, and bring out with them the younger as they grow up. I do not think that if we had taken any other view we should have obtained the public consideration and sympathy we have done.

I have talked, in the last few weeks, with many German Jews, and I have been struck by the general attitude among the older people: "We can and will stick it; we must stick it! But for heaven's sake rescue our children." That is what we are setting out to do. We are setting out to do that in more than a spirit of hope, in a spirit of determination, and with the conviction that we shall have the support of all of you, whatever your views on the internal politics of the Jewish community, and whatever your origin. This is the greatest problem of all, because if we are to survive, it is from the youth that we must spring.

AN APPEAL FOR ONE MILLION POUNDS

Now I am asking you, on behalf of the Committee, to raise the sum of £1,000,000 in Europe and in the British Dominions, to cover our work during the next four years. And I do not believe that this sum is impossible of attainment. I do believe we shall obtain it. I think I can say that, in spite of any major upheaval which may be in sight to-day, our job is nearly half done, and the job which is half done is very nearly done. But it is not quite done, and it is to you, ladies and gentlemen, and to those whom you can influence, that I look for the lesser half—and

I shall not be disappointed. I hope that when you leave here you will all go away with the determination to give of your utmost, that you will do all you can to explain to all who are interested the gravity of the problem, and the needs arising from it. It will perhaps interest you and hearten you when I tell you that the first two donations that were received, before this appeal was actually made, when it had only been broached on paper, both came from non-Jewish Englishmen, one of whom I know. The other I do not know; he wrote from one of the British Dependencies, not from England, saying he had heard of our appeal from England, and wished to express his sympathy. That should stir you up to do likewise, should show you that we Jews are not without friends in the world, and that even as we help ourselves, so we shall be helped.

I think that in this country of ours, this England, we Jews should be very happy. But we should not let the happiness of our conditions, the equality we enjoy, blind us to the lot of those who live in less happy lands. On the contrary, it should spur us on, and even if we ourselves feel that we are giving more than we can afford, we ought to enjoy the feeling. Our whole future is going to be judged, in my opinion, by what we do now. If we allow this negation of civilisation to continue unchallenged, if we ourselves do nothing to save those who cannot save themselves, we shall not deserve to be considered in the light in which we should wish to be considered.

JEWRY SHALL SURVIVE

But I do not believe for one minute that we shall fail, and I do believe that our example may go far to show others who contemplate, or consider the possibility of imitating the Nazis, that their doings will be in vain. We have survived persecution after persecution, and tragedy after tragedy, and we shall survive this one. But we shall only do so by one thing; and that is, by feeling that we deserve our self-respect, our dignity and our civilisation; because our civilisation has given rise to much of the civilisation of the world.

So, ladies and gentlemen, I appeal to you to give largely. If you can, give on a seven year covenant. It is better both for yourselves and for the object for which you are giving. And I would ask you if possible to do so because, when we carry out a plan which extends over a period of years, we must have an assured income over that period. It is very nice to hear people say: "I shall give you so much this year, and I hope to give you the same next year." Our plans have got to be made over four years, and we want to know what will be forthcoming. I hope that you will all consider that.

I hope to talk to some of you again at various meetings in the provinces, and you will probably get tired of hearing me ask for money. I shall get more tired of asking for it, but I shall not give up doing so. And I hope you will not give up giving, and that you will go on giving as long as it is necessary to give.

THE MARQUESS OF READING

15/33

You would not wish to dissolve this meeting without placing on record an expression of your gratitude to the Chairman and the Speakers of this afternoon. And if it falls to my lot to propose that Vote of Thanks, it perhaps has at least an appropriateness derived, not from me as an individual, but from the name which, unhappily, I now carry, and which I regard, and believe that you regard, as a symbol of two things; the first, that, given not even the opportunity, but only the right to make the opportunity, there is little limit to the service that a Jew can render to the public life of his country: the second, that this country at least knows not only how to use those services, but to recognise them without reservation and without stint.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this afternoon's proceedings have been, for those who have addressed you, but the outset of the task that lies before them. They have accepted a heavy, but an honourable, and indeed, an inevitable burden; but it is one that they cannot discharge merely by their own consciousness that they are doing right, unless they are supported in their endeavours by the confidence that the entire community is behind them. They have set out upon their task, not as delegates or representatives of this society or that organisation or the other body, but as men who, having in many aspects of the national life of this country served it honourably and loyally for years past, are still ready to put at the disposal of their own community their talents and their attainments, not as nominees of organisations, but as the acknowledged leaders of the people to whom they turn for support.

For these reasons, and for the exposition of their plans, temperate and yet inspired, wise and yet courageous, that we have listened to this afternoon we owe them, before we get to the stage of giving, the initial tribute of our admiration, our trust, and our thanks.

5/34

MR. NATHAN LASKI

We note with very great pleasure that the first opportunity Lord Reading has had, since the death of his father, of making a public appearance, is in a cause such as this, and we esteem him for it. I feel sure that I am expressing the sentiments of all here when I say, may Providence spare the new Lord Reading, and his charming wife, to follow the example of their late parents in their services to the Jewish community.

I feel greatly honoured to have been asked to second the Vote of Thanks to the Speakers to-day; perhaps I was chosen because I represent the largest Jewish community in England outside London. There is an old saying: "What Lancashire does to-day, England does to-morrow," and I venture to say, speaking for the provinces, that we shall do our duty. The admirable speeches that we have heard have touched our hearts. I am sure that there is not a single Jew in this country, or in the Empire, who will not make a sacrifice. I have often told my Manchester friends that none of us has yet made a sacrifice. I have urged them to give up their cigarettes and their cinemas, to give up a day's work as members of the Salvation Army do. Do not eat meat—it may hurt the butchers, but it will help our people in Germany.

All of us here are grateful that our parents, or our great-grandparents a hundred years ago, were wise enough to emigrate to this country, with its great traditions of liberty. That should make us still more aware of our duty to the less fortunate, and, speaking on behalf of the provinces, may I assure the three gentlemen who went on the mission to America that we recognise our duty, and I, for one, shall see that we in Manchester do our duty.

I have great pleasure in seconding the Vote of Thanks.

COUNCIL FOR GERMAN JEWRY

By entering into a Covenant to pay an amount to the Fund annually for seven years, contributors increase the amount of their donations by the amount of Income Tax on the annual sum paid. Contributors may deduct both the amount of their contribution and the Income Tax, which the Council claims, from their Surtax return.

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